

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BRIDGETOWN 1486

EO 11652:GDS
TAGS: PINS, EAIR, BB, CU, AO
SUBJECT: CUBAN AIRLINE'S BARBADOS OPERATION

1. ACCORDING LOCAL SOURCES OF UNCONFIRMED RELIABILITY, CUBANA HAS BECOME (OR AT LEAST ITS STAFF HERE IS SAYING IT HAS BECOME) DISSATISFIED WITH BWIA'S HANDLING OF RESERVATIONS, TICKETING, AND GROUND PROCESSING FOR SCHEDULED CUBANA FLIGHTS. (ONE REASON CITED FOR CUBANA'S UNHAPPINESS IS ALLEGED FACT ITS PASSENGER MANIFESTS -- INCLUDING NAMES OF INTRANSIT PASSENGERS-- ARE BEING PHOT-COPIED BY BWIA EMPLOYEES.) REPORTEDLY, AS A RESULT CUBANA INTENDS TO INCREASE ITS CUBAN STAFF AND DIRECT HIRE ENOUGH BARBADIANS TO BECOME SELF-SUFFICIENT. AS A FIRST STEP, A "SENIOR CUBANA OFFICIAL", NAE UNKNOWN, IS SUPPOSED TO ARRIVE IN BARBADOS SOMETIME WEEK OF 9-15 AUGUST TO TAKE CHARGE. A THIRD COUNTRY SOURCE DESCRIBES THE UNNAMED CUBAN AS "AN AIRLINE OFFICIAL WHO REALLY ISN'T" AND SAYS THE INDIVIDUAL IS PRESENTLY IN KINGSTON.

2. COMMENT: CUBANA'S OPERATION HERE IS HEADED BY ELISO MATOS (SPELLING ON GOB DOCUMENTS) WHO TOOK OVER FORMALLY ON 29 DECEMBER 1975, FROM RAUL PEREZ MAILLARES WHO ORIGINALLY RESISTERED COMPANY ON 8 JULY 1974. MILLARES, DESCRIBED AS NOW BASED IN KINGSTON, IS FREQUENTLY IN BARBADOS. CUBANA STAFF ALSO APPEARS TO INCLUDE TWO ADDITIONAL CUBANS, NAMES CONFIDENTIAL

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UNKNOWN, WHO WORK IN THE AIRPORT OFFICE. MATOS LIVES WITH

HIS "WIFE" (ACCORDING IMMIGRATION RECORD HERE THEY'RE NOT MARRIED) IN A HOUSE ORIGINALLY ACQUIRED BY MILLARES. SPANISH-SPEAKING RESIDENTS HERE SAY "MRS." MATOS FREELY DISCUSSES DETAILES OF AIRLINES OPERATIONS, MATOS BY CONTRAST IS TIGHT-LIPPED. BASED ON CASUAL OBSERVATTION, MATOS APPEARS TO SPEND LITTLE TIME AT HOME, ENTERTAIN NOT AT JLL. WHEN WE'VE SEEN HIM IN THE EVENINGS HE'S USUALLY BEEN WITH A SMALL SPANISH SPEAKING GROUP. MATOS IS REPORTED TO HAVE MADE A RECENT TRIP TO DOMINICA.

3. UNDER PRESENT BWIA/CUBANA ARRANGEMENTS THE CUBAN STAFF EFFORT REQUIRED TO SUPPORT CUBANA'S OPERATIONS, BOTH SCHEDULE AND ANGOLA FLIGHTS, IS MINIMAL AND THE CUBANS SEEM TO SPEND LITTLE TIME AT IT.

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